

# Undergraduates required to move off campus by March 17

*All MIT classes are canceled March 16–20 and will switch to online-only formats starting March 30*

By Kerri Lu and Wenbo Wu  
NEWS EDITORS

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, undergraduates living in MIT dorms, fraternities, sororities, or independent living groups (FSILGs) are required to move out by noon March 17. Classes will be canceled March 16–20, extending to spring break, which runs March 23–27. Classes will resume in online-only formats March 30.

President L. Rafael Reif announced the changes in an email to the MIT community around 5 p.m. March 10.

Canceling classes the week before spring break “will allow faculty and instructors two weeks to organize a full transition to online instruction,” Reif wrote. Classes will continue the week of March 9.

Undergraduates who wish to request an exception to remain on campus or request financial support for their departure from campus must fill out an online form by noon March 13.

Students will receive a response within 24 hours, according to a

March 11 email from Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart PhD '88, Vice President and Dean for Student Life Suzy Nelson, and Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz to all MIT students. The petitions will be examined on an individual basis by student support staff in the Division of Student Life (DSL) and the Office of the Vice Chancellor.

Reif wrote that exceptions may be made for international students who are from countries “hard-hit” by COVID-19 or may not be able to return to MIT due to visa issues, students with no home to return to, or students for whom “going home would be unsafe given the circumstances of their home country or home life.”

According to an email forwarded to *The Tech*, DSL encouraged a student whose petition for an exception was rejected to “think creatively about other alternatives and places where they will be able to stay.”

Students requesting financial support must describe on the form “how paying for [their] departure may create a significant financial

hardship,” Barnhart, Nelson, and Waitz wrote.

For students leaving on-campus or FSILG housing, MIT “will refund the actual costs for housing and meal plan on a pro-rated basis,” Barnhart, Nelson, and Waitz wrote. MIT will also refund half the spring semester student life fee, which is \$170.

MIT will also “reduce the amount we expect students to earn through a term-time job on a pro-rated basis and cover that amount with additional MIT Scholarship,” Barnhart, Nelson, and Waitz wrote. Student financial aid will not otherwise be affected by the changes.

Harvard University has enacted similar policies. Harvard classes will switch to remote instruction starting March 23, and students are asked to not return after spring break March 16–20.

Stanford is also switching to online classes. However, undergraduates currently on campus who “feel they need to remain here through the spring break and the spring

Moving Out, Page 2



@@—THE TECH

Students gather in Killian Court Tuesday amid rumors that they would be forced to move out due to the growing threat of COVID-19.

## New COVID-19 travel policies announced

*MIT-related international travel suspended, CPW events canceled*

By Kerri Lu and Wenbo Wu  
NEWS EDITORS

In response to the global coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, President L. Rafael Reif has announced new policies for travel, visitors, and MIT events, effective March 5 to May 15. The policies include suspending

all international travel with MIT programs and cancelling in-person MIT events with more than 150 participants, including Campus Preview Weekend (CPW).

Reif announced the policies in an email to the MIT community March 5.

COVID-19, Page 10

## Five students win Putnam contest

*MIT makes history by becoming the first school to claim all five highest-ranking spots in national mathematics competition*

By Jessica Shi and Whitney Zhang  
EDITORS

At the most recent William Lowell Putnam Mathematical Competition, which is generally considered one of the most prestigious math contests for undergraduate students, MIT made history by becoming the first school to claim all five of the highest-ranking spots.

Ashwin Sah '20, Kevin Sun '20, Yuan Yao '21, Shengtong Zhang '22, and Daniel Zhu '23 were named Putnam Fellows. Among them, an unnamed student became the fifth

perfect scorer in Putnam's history, according to MIT News.

Of the next 11 highest scorers, nine are from MIT; of the next 12, eight are from MIT.

The Mathematical Association of America administered the Putnam Dec. 7. The exam consisted of 12 questions, each worth 10 points, split across two 3-hour sessions. The median score was two.

“I regard it as a remarkable achievement I would put on my resume,” Zhang wrote in an email to *The Tech*. However, he does not consider performing well on the Putnam to necessarily be an indicator of

mathematical talent, since the competition “resembles very little of actual mathematics being done today.”

Qi Qi '20 was awarded the Elizabeth Lowell Putnam Prize, given to top-scoring women contestants.

“It honestly doesn't mean much, except that people are congratulating me this year,” Qi wrote in an email to *The Tech*. “I actually performed better on the Putnam in both of the previous two years than I did this year in terms of both score and ranking, but it so happened that I was lucky enough to receive the prize this year.”

Putnam, Page 10

## CUP proposes flexible P/NR policy

*Policies would allow incoming Class of 2024 to retroactively designate additional 48 units as P/NR, including non-GIRs*

By Richter Jordaan

The Committee on the Undergraduate Program (CUP) has proposed a flexible Pass/No Record grading policy that would allow students to retroactively convert any class to P/NR grading for up to 48 units cumulative after the first year. The policy, if approved in a faculty meeting April 22, will be implemented for the class of 2024 in the fall of 2020.

The policy would not affect any current MIT students.

The flexible P/NR grading proposal would replace sophomore exploratory and junior/senior P/D/F.

In an email sent to dorms March 10, the CUP encourages students to submit their thoughts about the proposed grading changes to an online form.

The Flexible P/NR grading system “provides more flexibility than the existing grading options offered

beyond the first year” and “is more straightforward for students and advisors to understand than Sophomore Exploratory and Junior-Senior P/D/F,” according to the proposal.

Additional objectives of the proposed grading system include “facilitating the transition to MIT, encouraging exploration and discovery throughout a student's career, and creating a safety net to help reduce

CUP, Page 10



KEVIN LY — THE TECH

Students stand in Lobby 7 Monday holding posters bearing empowering messages in solidarity with women all around the world.

### IN SHORT

Undergraduates who wish to **request an exception to remain on campus** or **request financial support** for their departure from campus must fill out an online form by noon March 13.

Undergraduates living in dorms and FSILGs are required to **move out** by noon March 17.

**Classes will be canceled** March 16–20.

**Spring break** is March 23–27.

**Classes will resume** in online-only formats March 30.

Interested in **joining The Tech**? Email [join@tech.mit.edu](mailto:join@tech.mit.edu).

Send news and tips to [news@tech.mit.edu](mailto:news@tech.mit.edu).

### MIT SAILING

Excellent performances over the past weekend.  
**SPORTS, p. 16**

### EMAIL SORTING

Changing a compulsive habit.  
**CAMPUS LIFE, p. 14**

### DESTROYER CONCERT

Music for the impending apocalypse.  
**ARTS, p. 8**



### WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Language's inherent bias.  
**OPINION, p. 5**

### WENDY

Yet another unnecessary, uninspired remake.  
**ARTS, p. 8**

### SECTIONS

Opinion ..... 4  
Arts ..... 8  
Fun Pages ..... 12  
Campus Life .... 14  
Sports ..... 16



WEATHER

# Sunny with a strong chance of school closure

By Kyle Morgenstein  
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

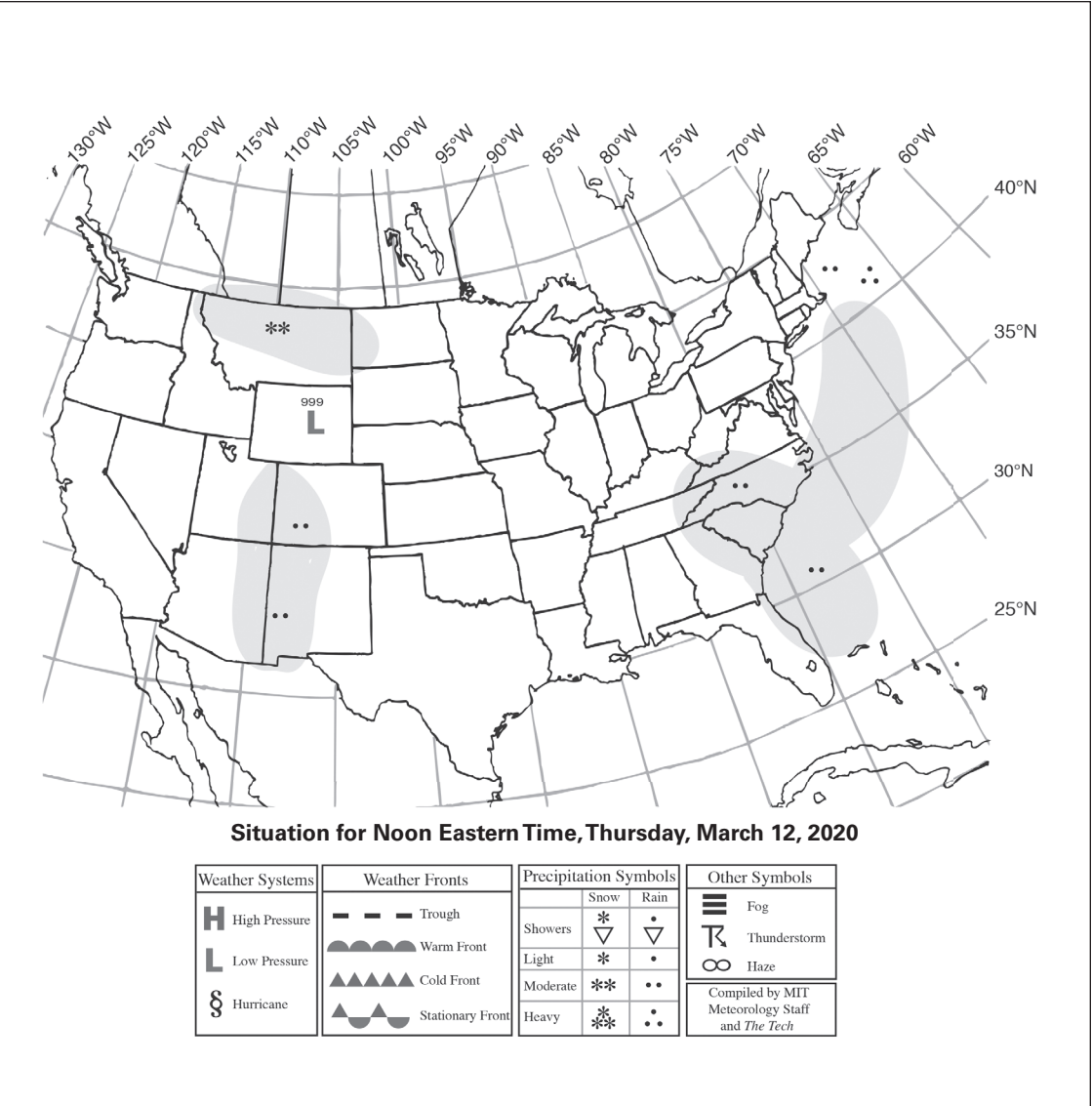
For MIT seniors, Friday the 13th will be their last ever day of college. As many high school seniors eagerly await their Pi Day admissions decisions, current MIT students will be packing their belongings, told not to expect to return. Fitting for a rainy Friday the 13th. The remainder of “senior week” will continue to see chilly but not freezing temperatures, with strong winds. Apart from Friday, expect mostly clear skies, clearing to full sun over the weekend. The last few days on campus this semester should be nice out, at least. Definitely take advantage and spend time outside with friends, the green spaces on campus are beautiful this time of year.

Extended Forecast

**Today:** Partly cloudy. High of 46°F (8°C) with 12 mph winds headed west.  
**Tonight:** Partly cloudy. Low of 41°F (5°C) with southwest 9 mph winds.  
**Tomorrow:** Rainy. Temperatures range from 60°F to 39°F (16°C to 4°C) with 18 mph headed north.  
**Saturday:** Mostly Sunny, High of 53°F and low of 32°F (12°C to 0°C).  
**Sunday:** Sunny. High of 45°F (7°C).

Nationally, the east coast will see rain for much of the remainder of the week, as will parts of the south west. The rest of the country can expect mostly clear skies, which is important as students all across the country fly to and from spring break or home. Despite the abrupt end to the academic year, this weekend we have reason to celebrate: Pi Day. No matter how you feel about the changing school conditions, treat yourself to a nice slice of pie, you’ve certainly earned it!

As a senior this will be my last article in *The Tech*. For those of you who read the weather column, thank you, and to everyone, best of luck in your respective futures! It has been an absolute pleasure to call this incredible place home. IHTFP.



# Seniors should satisfy swim graduation requirement before leaving campus

Moving Out, from Page 1

quarter” are “welcome to do so” provided they fill out an online form, according to the Stanford Health Alerts website.

Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker declared a state of emergency March 10 after the number of COVID-19 cases jumped to 92. As of press time, Massachusetts has 95 confirmed COVID-19 cases. 77 of these cases were traced back to the Biogen Annual Health Care conference, at which three attendees were initially infected.

In an effort to contain COVID-19, Trump has suspended travel from Europe (with the exception of the U.K.) for 30 days, starting March 13.

**COVID-19 at MIT**

MIT became aware March 11 that “a CSAIL staff member had a brief interaction in recent days with someone who was diagnosed today with COVID-19,” MIT Medical announced on its website.

The staff member is “not currently displaying any COVID-19 symptoms, but is voluntarily self-quarantining.” The interaction occurred off campus, MIT Medical wrote.

“It was determined that there is little to no risk to the MIT community from this encounter” MIT Medical wrote, adding that “public health officials are in charge of deciding whether to investigate possible contacts.”

“If you are not contacted by the Department of Public Health, you are not presumed to be at immediate risk,” MIT Medical wrote.

Additionally, an individual who visited Sloan on Feb. 26 and 27 developed symptoms March 4 and was diagnosed with COVID-19, according to an email from David Schmittlein, dean of the Sloan School of Management, to Sloan students March 9.

“Any MIT Sloan staff or students known to have interacted with this person are currently on self-quarantine and asymptomatic,” Schmittlein wrote.

Schmittlein wrote that MIT Facilities “has deep-cleaned the on-campus spaces where this individual visited and continues to clean all touch points across campus,” such as door knobs, elevator buttons, and handrails.

**Housing**

Reif wrote that freshmen, sophomores, and juniors should pack and travel home as if they “do not expect

to return here until the fall semester,” and seniors should pack as if they “will not return to MIT for classes.”

Residents are also required to fill out an intent form outlining their move-out plans and forwarding address.

Residence halls and FSILGs place students “in close quarters,” Reif wrote, and while collaboration at MIT is valued during “normal times,” it “increases the risk of Covid-19 spreading on our campus.”

Reif wrote that MIT’s plan “follows directly from state health guidance that universities take steps to reduce the density of the population on campus and increase social distancing.”

Barnhart, Nelson, and Waitz wrote that Housing and Residential Services (HRS) will “provide residence halls with boxes and bins for moving as well as dumpsters for disposing of trash.” HRS is also “exploring storage options” for dorms and FSILGs.

Most dorms have informed residents that they are guaranteed a limited amount of storage. Residents of Baker, East Campus, Maseeh, McCormick, and Random can store two boxes or one box and a small fridge. Residents of Simmons and Burton Conner can store at least five boxes.

David Friedrich, senior associate dean for housing and residential services, wrote in an email to the student body March 11 that carts will be available in the lobbies of most residence halls. In addition, the “move-out envelope will provide a blank address field for residents to identify their preferred mailing address for the remainder of the semester” and all packages received after move-out will be returned to sender, Friedrich wrote.

**Dining**

“For now, dining operations will continue with some slight modifications. Self-service stations will be closed; stations will be full service or offered as grab and go,” Reif wrote.

All five dining halls will be open on their regular schedules through dinner March 17. The pick-a-lunch in Walker Memorial will close at the end of service March 12, Barnhart, Nelson, and Waitz wrote.

Starting March 18, all residential dining halls except Maseeh will be closed. Maseeh dining will serve brunch from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and dinner from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

MIT Dining will “assess conditions for eateries across campus and may make schedule changes as needed,” Barnhart, Nelson, and Waitz wrote.

TechMart will close 7 p.m. March 15. TechMart will relocate to the Coffeehouse Lounge on the third floor of the student center and reopen March 19. Store hours will be 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday to Friday. Only credit card, debit card, and TechCash will be accepted.

**Student center**

Stratton Student Center will close 9 p.m. March 17.

Starting March 18, the student center will only be accessible to MIT community members with “valid staff, faculty, student, or affiliate IDs” from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

**Academics**

Reif wrote that online instruction will be implemented for all classes from March 30 until the end of the spring semester.

Since March 10, all lectures with more than 150 students in a single classroom have been required to take place online, according to an email from Waitz to MIT deans and department heads March 9.

“We have just sent a note to all EECS instructors asking them to immediately delay (or cancel) exams and homeworks that were due this week until after the Spring break,” EECS faculty heads Joel Voldman PhD ’01, Antonio Torralba, Arvind, and EECS department head Asu Ozdaglar PhD ’03 wrote on 6.AcAd (the EECS academic Piazza).

Similarly, math department head Michel Goemans PhD ’90 wrote in an email to the math community that instructors should be “flexible and understanding” by postponing or cancelling midterms and automatically extending this week’s assignment deadlines to next week.

Math academic administrator Barbara Peskin wrote on 18.MMFORUM (the math department Piazza) that the math department “doesn’t know” how its summer research programs such as SPUR and UROP+ will be affected.

*The Tech* has received confirmation that several classes have rescheduled and virtualized their midterms.

In an email to all 6.046 (Design and Analysis of Algorithms) students, instructor Mauricio Karchmer wrote that the two originally scheduled quizzes will be replaced with an

online midterm. “Due to the rapidly changing situation and the associated stress that is interfering with some students’ ability to concentrate on academics right now, we have concluded that holding the planned quiz this evening would not be productive,” Karchmer wrote.

“We are sympathetic that all of your lives have been turned upside down, and that you have many challenges in these coming days,” Professor John Gabrieli PhD ’87 wrote in an email to all 9.00 (Introduction to Psychological Science) students.

Global Languages (GL) director Emma Teng wrote in an email to all GL students that while teaching remotely will be a “new experience,” language instructors are “working hard to make sure that your GL classes will be as rich and academically rewarding as possible.”

“For majors, minors, concentrators – especially those who are graduating – we will be paying special attention to making sure your requirements are fulfilled in the best possible way,” Teng wrote. Teng added that once remote instruction is implemented, faculty and staff will look into maintaining the “vibrant” GL community “through social media or other means.”

As of press time, over 1,500 students have signed a petition to allow students to opt-in to grading standards of PE (for A, B, or C level performance) and NE (for D or F performance) in accordance with section 2.64 of the Rules & Regulations of the Faculty.

The regulations state that the Chair of the Faculty can authorize the use of these grades “when the performance of a student is substantively impacted by a period of Significant Disruption.”

Barnhart, Nelson, and Waitz wrote that the Faculty Officers “are currently working to determine the most appropriate academic policies to establish.”

**PE classes and swim test**

Stephanie Smith, director of recreation, wrote in an email to MIT students March 10 that all recreation programs and activities will be canceled March 16 to May 15. Quarter 4 PE classes will be canceled, but students are expected to attend Quarter 3 classes until Friday. “As of right now, DAPER facilities will be open for informal recreation on our regular schedule,” Smith wrote.

“We understand that recreation is a source of stress relief, social connectedness, and physical fitness for many in the MIT community,” Smith wrote. Questions may be submitted to DAPER through an online form.

Seniors who need to satisfy the swim graduation requirement should “take the swim test before [they] leave campus,” Carrie Moore, director of physical education and wellness, wrote in an email to students registered for a swim class March 10. The test will be offered 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. March 12.

On March 14, students can request up to two virtual make up PE assignments from virtualmakeup@mit.edu. Students with questions about Quarter 4 can email quarter4@mit.edu.

**Libraries**

MIT Libraries’ service points will be closed from March 14 until further notice, according to the MIT Libraries website. All online library services will continue.

MIT Libraries plans to keep all 24/7 study spaces open (excluding the Hayden Library study space, which is currently being renovated) “pending confirmation of custodial services availability,” the email wrote.

The Scan & Deliver service will continue so that community members can access digital copies of materials while the libraries are closed.

Library staff will remain available during the closure “to help the community access online resources and services,” according to the website.

**Student organizations**

All student organization events scheduled after 5 p.m. March 13 are canceled, according to an email from the Student Organizations, Leadership & Engagement Office (SOLE) to student leaders. Events “previously approved by the Institute” and scheduled before that time will be allowed.

Students cannot change the date of a previously scheduled event to take place before that time, and “no new student organization event registrations will be approved,” SOLE wrote.

SOLE recommends that student organizations submit a record of lost funds due to event cancellations through the Unrecoverable Expenses/Loss Revenue Report.

Undergraduate Association (UA) President Mahi Elango ’20 wrote in



# S3 provides online form for subsidizing any ‘urgent costs’ for MIT students

Moving Out, from Page 2

an email to undergraduates March 11 that the UA and DSL are working together to transfer unused student group funding, along with “a large majority of the UA budget” to MIT’s ARM Coalition to help with “emergency assistance for students.” Student groups interested in participating should fill out an online form. The UA has already recieved over \$100,000, Elango wrote.

SOLE is developing an updated FAQ about COVID-19 and student organization events. Students can send questions to COVIDevents@mit.edu or SOLE@mit.edu.

**International students**

For the rest of spring semester, MIT students who are enrolled full-time “will be considered to be maintaining their F-1 or J-1 student visa status, whether they are physically inside the U.S. or outside the U.S.,” according to an email from David Elwell, associate dean and director of the International Students Office (ISO), to international students.

Students who are returning to the U.S. within 5 months will “be considered to have continually maintained their visa status.” This will allow them to participate in on-campus employment, apply for off-campus employment authorizations, and continue studying at MIT after this semester, Elwell wrote.

“While F-1 student regulations do place certain limits on online instruction, the federal government has informed US institutions of higher education that it anticipates being flexible if institutions make temporary curricular changes in response to COVID-19,” Barnhart, Nelson, and Waitz wrote.

“We do not believe MIT’s move to remote teaching for the remainder of the spring semester will adversely impact F-1 students’ visa status,” they continued.

“ISO continues to process any new visa document requests, including for F-1 Curricular Practical Training, F-1 Optional Practical Training, J-1 Academic Training, Form I-20 or Form DS-2019 Extensions, letters, etc. requested through iMIT,” Elwell wrote. The ISO will also stay open for drop off, pick up, and mailing of visa documents.

F-1 students applying for OPT authorization for summer work must ensure their application is received by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services while they are physically present in the U.S.

Students whose F-1 or J-1 visa will expire before they return to the U.S. must apply for a new visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate while abroad, Elwell wrote.

Students who will not complete their program of study by the end date listed on their Form I-20 (F-1 visa holders) or Form DS-2019 (J-1 visa holders) should request an extension in iMIT, Elwell wrote. Extension requests will require a letter from the student’s undergraduate or graduate administrator.

The ISO will continue to provide services to students remotely. “In-person appointments may be limited, but ISO Advisors will continue to be available by email or by phone,” Elwell wrote.

The ISO will update students through the “ISO Updates-Spring 2020” and “Major Immigration Updates and Alerts” pages on the ISO website, along with ISO Broadcast emails and the ISO E-Newsletters. Students can also find information about visa and travel restrictions on the U.S. Embassy and Consulate websites.

**Graduate students**

Graduate students, including Graduate Resident Advisors, are not required to move off campus. However, graduate students who can work remotely are “strongly encouraged” to relocate off campus, Reif wrote.

“As with MIT staff, we ask that all research groups take steps to increase social distancing in the workplace,” Reif wrote.

Barnhard, Nelson, and Waitz wrote that graduate students will receive an email with more information “very soon.”

**Faculty and staff**

“For now, MIT operations will continue as normal, and staff should report to work unless they are sick,” Reif wrote.

Reif wrote that supervisors should be “flexible, adaptable and sensitive to conditions in each unit,” particularly in regards to staff members who may “fall into categories of greater risk.”

“In case working remotely ultimately becomes necessary, all units should start planning to make that broadly feasible,” Reif wrote.

**Commencement**

“No decision has yet been made about this year’s Commencement ceremonies,” Reif wrote.

**MISTI summer programs**

MISTI summer programs may be affected. Although the new interna-

tional travel policies are only in place until May 15, “the situation is fluid,” Kimberly Allen, director of media relations, wrote in an email to *The Tech*.

“MISTI has informed interested students that they may either continue the process towards identifying a placement abroad for the summer, or they may withdraw from the program without penalty,” Allen wrote.

“MISTI’s top priority is the safety of our students, so we will continue to monitor developments and any changes to MIT’s policies and advise students accordingly,” April Julich Perez, executive director of MISTI, told Allen.

MISTI Italy director Serenella Sferza wrote in an email to program applicants March 6 that several MISTI Italy partners “have been unable to commit to hosting a MIT student.” Students should “explore other alternatives” but “preserve some flexibility, so you will be able to go if the crisis gets resolved,” Sferza wrote.

**Student response**

Many students have reacted negatively to MIT’s response to COVID-19.

Students held a party on Killian Court around 2:45 p.m. March 10 in response to rumors that undergraduates would be required to move out of their dorms. Notably, students brought a Purell dispenser from Lobby 10 to the party. Police shut down the party about an hour later.

Vandalism was reported at Burton Conner the night of March 10.

“We understand that with the COVID-19 institutional actions, our daily lives have been disrupted, however, this behavior is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated in our living communities,” Friedrich and Judy Robinson, senior associate dean for residential education, wrote in an email to Burton Conner residents.

Students or floors found responsible for the vandalism will be billed for the damages and may face disciplinary action, Friedrich and Robinson wrote, adding that students should “not add unnecessary challenges to an already difficult time.”

Some students have also expressed concern about the effects of forcing undergraduates to move out on short notice.

Lillian Chin G wrote in an email to *The Tech* that MIT’s actions are “the equivalent of a landlord evicting an entire apartment complex in 5 days notice.”

“Having 6000 people, probably carriers, travel around the world back to their parents and grandpar-

ents to save the university population is literally a reverse quarantine,” Chin wrote.

Chin also criticized MIT’s failure to “open Metropolitan Storage Warehouse as storage space for undergrads, despite vacating it years earlier.”

Chin wrote that although her PhD research has not been affected by the changes, she has faced a significant “personal burden” in the face of “mass chaos and uncertainty” before Reif’s announcement. Chin has had to “console” UROP students who can no longer work in her lab and “field questions for her fellow graduate students who were less plugged into the rumor network.”

Chin has volunteered to let displaced undergraduates stay in her house.

**Resources**

MIT updates about COVID-19 will be available at mit.edu/covid19.

Students can fill out an online form for S3 to subsidize “urgent costs such as winter clothing or an emergency trip home,” according to the MIT Division of Student Life website. The form requires speaking with a S3 dean in person or over the phone. However, S3 has no more availability for appointments this week.

For non-critical needs or situations which may be better fulfilled by other resources, S3 requests may be denied and students will be provided alternate resources.

Students should send questions about specific moving logistics to their Housing Operation Manager, Area Directors, or undergrad-covidmoveout@mit.edu.

Resources for students facing food insecurity are available at https://studentlife.mit.edu/s3/money-food-resources/food-resources. Undergraduates can request meal swipes by speaking to a S3 dean or complete the Meal Swipe Request Form. Graduate students can email Naomi Carton, associate dean for graduate residential life, at naomic@mit.edu.

Students who will not have reliable access to the internet and computing resources for online learning can contact ed-continuity@mit.edu.

In response to many colleges enacting similar measures to MIT, U-Haul is offering 30 days of free self-storage to students moving from their schools, as well as special rates for rental trucks and trailers, according to an email from U-Haul forwarded to *The Tech*, though there “may be limited availability.”

A Pod Pass must be placed on all storage pods, which should be put in specific parking spaces while on MIT campus. Students should refer to the pod storage protocol and contact 617-258-6510 or mitparking@mit.edu. MIT Parking and Transportation must grant permission for students to obtain private storage pods.

Graduate students can send requests and inquiries to gradsupport@mit.edu.

Students whose course instructors are being inflexible with coursework or attendance can email covid-course-issues@mit.edu or fill out an online form.

Cambridge mayor Sumbul Siddiqui tweeted March 10 that students who are unable to find housing because of their university’s COVID-19 policies can message her or contact her office at 617-448-1525.

Barnhart, Nelson, and Waitz wrote that MIT is “taking steps to virtualize” personal support resources such as Student Support Services, the Office of the First Year, the Office of Minority Education, GradSupport, and Student Mental Health and Counseling Services.

Additionally, all MIT offices are “open and will be accessible to undergraduates in-person” until March 17.

Students in need of support from MIT alumni or other community members can fill out an online form. Alumni, graduate students, or other community members interested in providing help can fill out a separate form.

Yolanda Lau ’02, the creator of the two forms, wrote in an email to *The Tech* that she, like most of the alumni she knows, continues to feel “deeply connected to MIT and the MIT community.”

Lau wrote that after speaking to several alumni upon hearing of MIT’s decision, the “general consensus was that we all wanted to figure out how to help.”

Lau has received over 450 form responses. Alumni and community members have offered housing and financial support, emotional support, and airline miles. “Some of the responses have explicitly stated temporary housing (1 week or less) but generally people seem open to longer stays,” Lau wrote.

“I cannot imagine how I would be feeling right now if I was one of the students being asked to pack up and go home,” Lau wrote.

  
vs

  
vs

  
vs

  
vs

  
vs

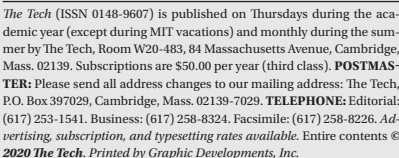
  
vs

  
vs



Join *The Tech!*  
sports@tech.mit.edu





*More exceptions should be made for students to remain on campus, in addition to aid for students preparing to move out*

In addition, many undergraduates suffer from financial hardship, come from difficult home situations, or have no home to return to at all. Furthermore, over 10% of MIT's undergraduate population originates from countries outside of the U.S., many of which are even more heavily impacted by the virus. For international students attending MIT on tenuous student visas or fear-

Moving inevitably incurs many expenses, including travel and storage, that students may not be financially equipped to deal with, especially when many stu-

*Editorials are the official opinion of The Tech. They are written by the Editorial Board, which consists of Publisher Nathan Liang, Editor in Chief Kristina Chen, Managing Editor Ivana Alardín, Executive Editor Aron Ricardo Perez-Lopez, and Opinion Editor Jen Fox. Business Manager Thomas Wang also contributed to this editorial.*

# Build a writing portfolio.

News | Arts | Opinion | Campus Life | Science | Features | Sports

[join@tech.mit.edu](mailto:join@tech.mit.edu)



## GUEST COLUMN

# When the Japanese language is no longer 'kawaii'

*A deeper look at the sexism woven into the fabric of Japanese 'kanji' characters*

**By Alana Chandler**

Disclaimer: Japanese is the language of focus in this article because my background is Japanese. The content is based on observations I made when speaking and writing this language.

As the routine went on Saturday mornings during middle school, I crammed for my Japanese vocabulary quiz on the hour-long drive to the Japanese Saturday School I attended. Attempting to pound the complex strokes into my head, I scribbled down hundreds of characters, one after another in a robotic fashion. In the rushed and rhythmic push, pull, flick of my pencil, it was seldom that I would take a moment to actually consider the meaning of the characters I was writing. Yet, on an otherwise mundane Saturday morning drive, something changed. I was learning the character for “slave” (奴), going through my typical chicken-scratch routine, when I paused. It dawned on me that this character was composed of two others — the characters for “female” (女) and “hand” (又). Suddenly, I wanted to tear up the paper I was writing on. I looked at my trembling hand, that of a girl, stained with the matte silver of lead rubbed off page. My fingers curled tight.

**Each kanji tells its own story; it is this nature that sheds light on the embittering roots of discrimination in Japanese society.**

Quite recently at MIT, the term “freshmen” was replaced with “first years.” In an effort to promote equality across all genders, many universities like MIT are motivating the academic community to use neutral terms instead of words with gendered origins. For some, such a transition in language is perceived as petty and even meaningless. After all, no one says the word “mankind” with the purpose of excluding women from humanity; no one refers to something as “man-made” with the intention of stressing that that something was built solely with testosterone-pumped strength... right?

While it's true that many people of all genders use such terms without any consciously sexist motive, this is beside the point. What is paramount is the realization that language uncovers the basic perception and biases of a group. In using words chosen by those in power, language reflects a world of how the authority wants the group to be, consequently shaping the very group that uses that language. A growing body of research suggests that gendered language contributes to sexism. In one study by the

Rhode Island School of Design, of 111 countries investigated, countries that spoke languages with gendered grammar systems, such as Spanish and German, evidenced more gender inequality compared to countries with other grammar systems.

Perhaps even more elucidating of the male-female discrepancy is the nefarious description of sex crimes.

Yet, this does not go to say that countries without gendered grammar systems have negligible sexism. At a more basic level than grammar, an examination of Japanese words, as well as the characters that make up those words, reveals that even languages without gendered grammar systems can be insidiously gendered.

Unlike the alphabet, Japanese uses kanji (漢字), an ideographic writing system developed in China around 3,000 years ago that combines visual symbols to create a word. In fact, kanji were what I practiced on my drives to Japanese school. For instance, 人 is the kanji character for “person,” and 木 is the character for “tree.” Combining these two characters creates the character for “rest” (休) with the “person” character on its side up against the “tree” character. Each kanji tells its own story; it is this nature that sheds light on the embittering roots of discrimination in Japanese society.

While kanji were exclusive to upper-class men, “hiragana” (平仮名), a phonetic letter system, was later created by the few females in the upper class who could read kanji. Mostly used by women, hiragana letters were called “onna moji” (female lettering), while kanji characters were called “otoko moji” (male lettering). While “kan” (漢) in kanji means “man” in Japanese, “hira” (平) means level, flat and peaceful — perhaps this alone sheds light on the perception of women during the inception of Japanese writing.

The dawn of hiragana deepened the divide between men and women. General communication matters, news, and business information were written in kanji, while hiragana were used by women for personal purposes. The historical exclusion of women from writing kanji made it possible for men to develop words and revitalize characters with sexist meanings behind the backs of the very people they talked about.

Like Latin and Greek roots in English words, Japanese characters are often created based on radicals, or “hen” (編), used for categorization of the character’s meaning. For example, the “person” hen (人) is used

three times to create the following character, 众, which means “crowd”. The “tree” 木 was used three times in one character (森) means “forest”. Yet, the female 女 was used three times in one character (姦) means both “loud” and “rape.”

Some common kanji words include the following:

Bride (嫁): female hen (女) + house (家)  
 Wife (家内): house (家) + inside (内)  
 Husband (主人): synonymous to "lord"  
 and "master"  
 Security/Cheap (安): female hen (女) +  
 roof hen (宀)

These characters suggest that it is most safe and effective for men to have women remain domestic beings.

While there does exist a handful of kanji associated with women with positive connotations, most kanji for women have a negative connotation, while kanji for men award power and leniency in their actions. Combining the female hen with the “disease” hen creates the character for “jealousy” (嫉), implying that envy is a sickness inflicted by women. Even the character for “dislike” (嫌) contains the familiar female hen. On the other hand, the character for “man” (男) is that of dignity and hardwork, composed of the character for “field” (田) and “strength” (力). The character for “bravery” (勇) looks almost identical to the character for “man”.

Both of the characters 嫵 and 嫵 are comprised of only the male (男) and female (女) characters. The former character (嫵) is two female characters enclosing a male character and translates to “flirting.” The latter (嫵) is two male characters enclosing a female character and means “to tease and bully,” “toy with,” and “make fun of.” These characters imply that when there is a female majority, they seduce the male, yet when there is a male majority, the men can have a good time at the expense of female suffering. Granted, even my mother who is a native Japanese speaker, had never seen these characters, showing that although these characters exist in the Japanese language, they are not heavily used.

Perhaps even more elucidating of the male-female discrepancy is the nefarious description of sex crimes. The kanji for “molester” (痴漢) is made of characters meaning “foolish” (痴) and “man” (漢). This insinuates that message that perverted men are indulgently stupid in their sexual desires rather than criminal abusers. While 30 different words prevail for female prostitution, I could not find a single one that exists for men who buy their services. Kanji portray women as objects, and men can use these objects with little shame and social repercussion.

While these kanji convey stereotypical notions of women, people do not use these words on a daily basis with the thought that



---

COURTESY OF SOUSAKU KANJI CONTEST

**Pseudo-kanji submission meaning**  
**strong-willed and spirited,** containing  
the female radical.

the characters are discriminatory. When learning kanji, the emphasis is placed on learning characters as a whole, rather than their components, making it almost automatic to bypass thinking about their sexist meanings. Yet, given that so many kanji relating to women are demeaning, is it a surprise that sexism is still widespread in Japan? According to *The Japan Times*, in 2019, only 13 percent of managerial positions were held by women in Japan. Japanese is just one example of a language that reflects underlying gender bias, embodying cultural thoughts and values.

**Yet, given that so many kanji relating to women are demeaning, is it a surprise that sexism is still widespread in Japan?**

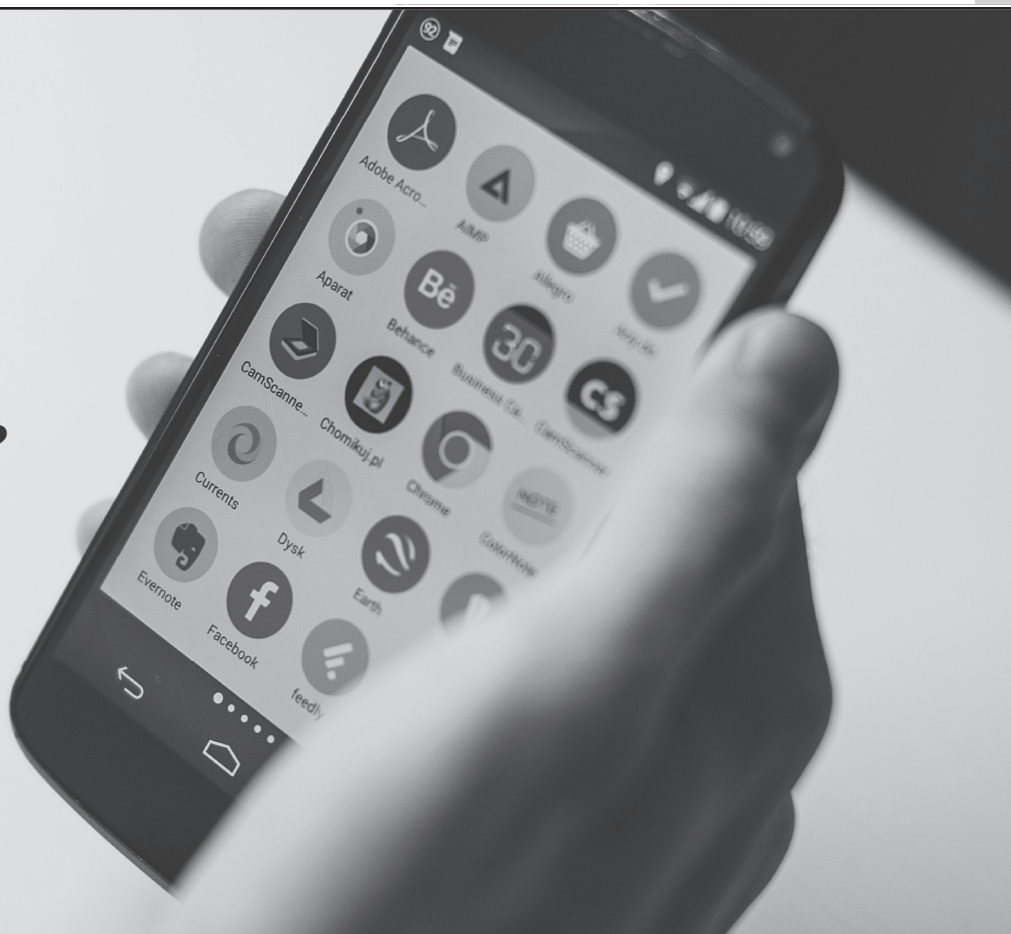
As I continue to learn kanji, I am amazed at the potential for a single character to convey both meaning and sound. Yet, as times progress from the nativity of kanji, its evolution and adaptability is required to suit the modern times, instead of depict an inaccurate, insulting perspective.

There exists a yearly competition in Japan to create pseudo-kanji; one such submission replaced the male character (男) in bravery (勇) with the female character (女) to symbolize one who is strong-willed and spirited. Seeing new characters like these brings me hope that language that excludes or demeans women, or anyone for that matter, is a reality we may one day no longer have to bear. While changing a language from its most basic component, its characters, is perhaps idealistic, the first step to making progress is by being aware of the sexism inherent in our world.

**Tweet the best tweets?  
Post the best posts?  
Get a million likes on both?**

# Join Social Media @ The Tech!

join@tech.mit.edu









# In response to MIT's decision to send students home

*MIT can do more to support its undergraduate community*

**By Anthony Cheng and Sherry Zhou**

In light of the coronavirus epidemic that is currently sweeping across the world, on Tuesday, March 10, MIT announced its hard decision to send all undergraduate students home. Considering the rapidly-escalating situation (e.g., the canceling of the NBA season as a result of a player testing positive, the US travel ban from Europe), we commend MIT's imperative and proactive policies. We are writing this letter to re-emphasize what we feel makes MIT special, to its undergraduates in particular, and what other work MIT can focus on to sustain those aspects of the institution and its community as a whole.

**While CPW certainly will not be happening in person, the administration can and should work with students on virtualizing many aspects of the CPW experience.**

From freshman learning communities to extracurricular student groups, activities, and teams, the MIT campus fosters so

much opportunity for enrichment, learning, support, stress relief, and community outside of traditional academic courses. Many of these communities consist largely or solely of undergraduates, and have needed to go on “pause” for the rest of the semester. The projects and physical gatherings that unite students in these groups will be derailed, and without these aspects to bring them together, students will almost certainly feel the effects of loneliness and separation. For many students, these communities are key for the support, physical space, and structured time they provide for their members to come together and destress. Many of these communities are also struggling to figure out how to prepare for changes in leadership that are due to graduating seniors departing earlier — with all undergraduates in a frenzy to pack and move out, there is little time to meet and discuss in person their communities’ futures. These communities, which are essential for student health and wellness, are at risk of falling apart and no longer being able to support their members during this tough period. The administration should look to strongly support student groups during this time in their efforts to sustain their communities’ impact (support and communication) on their members, their community values, and their contribution to the greater MIT community.

In particular, MIT's Campus Preview Weekend (CPW), when students come together to show off the best MIT has to offer, is one amazing example of the rich and vibrant undergraduate community found here at MIT. It is one of the largest campus events of the year, and is driven by the undergraduate population in coordination with administration. While CPW certainly will not be happening in person, the administration can and should work with students on virtualizing many aspects of the CPW experience to show to the rest of the world that our community stands strong, and that we care very much about potential new members of the MIT community. We applaud the efforts of students who have already thought about virtualizing CPW (Club Beaver) and providing a means of digital connection (Busy Beavers).

**Communities, which are essential for student health and wellness, are at risk of falling apart and no longer being able to support their members during this tough period.**

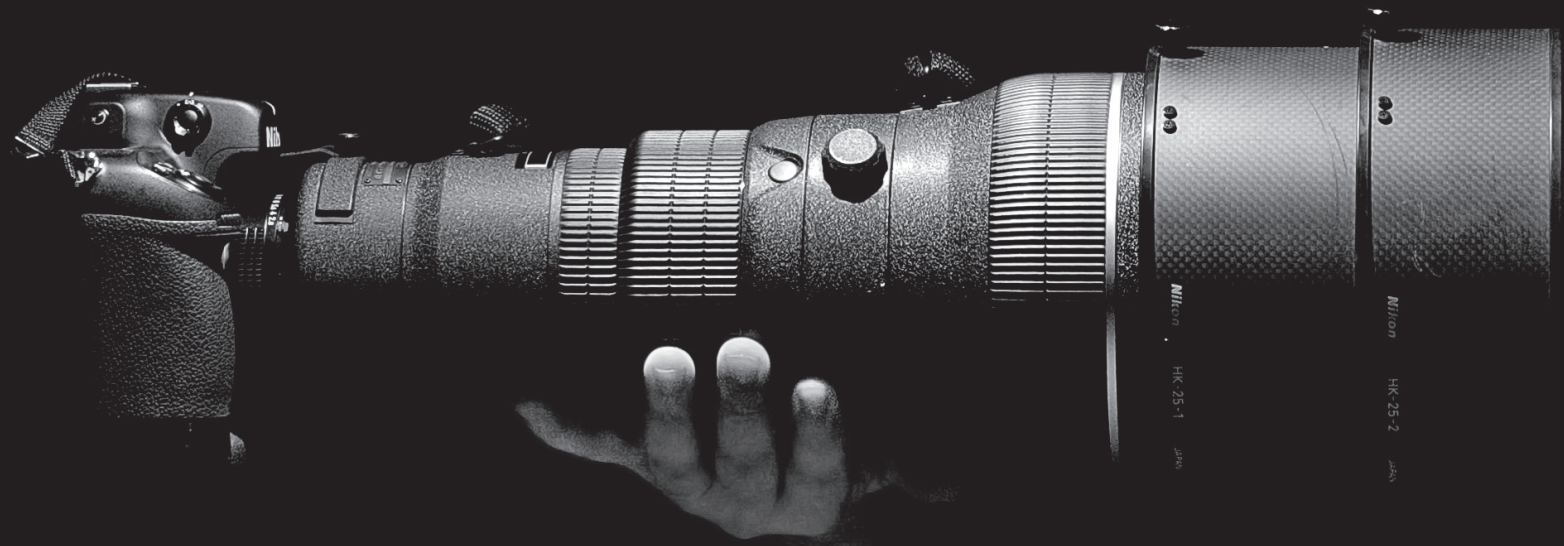
### Results we seek:

We understand that MIT has many highly trained professionals and administrators who are working around the clock to ensure the best outcomes for students. We want our administration, however, to emphasize **these following outcomes** to ensure maximum effectiveness and measured, risk-reducing results:

- Ensure that students with less access to resources (e.g., to stable family connections, the internet, local medical coverage) will remain connected and protected.
- Maintain as many on-campus activities and organizations as possible.
- Work with student leaders to ensure that educational, living, and extracurricular communities are well-supported in terms of communications and transition plans.
- And most importantly, ensure that all undergraduates continue to be an integral part of the MIT community regardless of where they are.

*Anthony Cheng and Sherry Zhou are members of the MIT Class of 2020. Cheng is studying Materials Science Engineering and is a former president of MacGregor House. Zhou is studying Chemistry and Biology and is a former co-chair of Undergraduate Association Committee on Sustainability.*

# JOIN THE PHOTOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT OF THE TECH!



EMAIL JOIN@TECH.MIT.EDU OR JOIN US  
FOR DINNER SUNDAY NIGHTS AT 6PM IN  
OUR OFFICE (W20-483)



# Peter Pan reimagined

A close-up portrait of a young boy with curly brown hair and blue eyes, looking slightly to the right. He is partially obscured by green foliage in the foreground.

**Devin France stars** as the titular character in *Wendy*.

In *Wendy*, director Benh Zeitlin puts a creative twist on J.M. Barrie's story of Peter Pan. While the movie's visuals and sound effects are quite impressive, Zeitlin's slow-moving, actionless plot fails to capture the moviegoer's attention.

As the movie begins, viewers are introduced to a young girl named Wendy and her two twin brothers, James and Douglas. Dis-

content with their dull lives, the three siblings escape their home by jumping aboard a passing train. With the help of a mysterious young boy named Peter, they travel to a magical island where kids never grow up and experience the pure exhilaration of childhood.

After a while, however, the children discover that the island has a dreary side as well, one in which grown men and women, aged and devoid of hope, grumble and toil in the dust. As the children on the island begin to internalize the dark realities of life, it is up

to Wendy and Peter to protect their friends' youthful innocence.

Filmed in the Caribbean, *Wendy* boasts outstanding visuals. The shots of the island, full of trees, beaches, and active volcanoes, are breathtaking, and they evoke feelings of awe and admiration. Moreover, the frame of the movie is in constant motion; it appears to ride the waves, flow with the wind, and frequently cuts back and forth from one character to another. This technique contributes to a sensation of movement and helps to keep viewers on their toes.

Like the visuals, the soundtrack is quite impressive. The music is fast-moving and mystical, filling the movie with suspense. In one scene near the film's conclusion, a few of the children begin singing a song to praise the "mother," a giant whale-like sea creature that gives the island its magical power. As their voices grow louder, more and more islanders, including both the young and the aged, join the chorus. With all of the islanders singing in unison, the simple song transforms into a powerful and poignant anthem.

Despite the excellent audio and visuals, *Wendy* sports a lackluster storyline. The plot is elementary, slow-moving, and often completely stagnant. The many scenes of grumpy old men and women grimacing and shouting at happy young boys and girls are boring and sometimes cringeworthy. In addition, the scenes are repetitive. For example, on several occasions, the children dive into the water to experience the majesty and power of the "mother." Such scenes,

while perhaps visually stimulating, fail to advance the storyline.

In spite of these flaws, Zeitlin does manage to pull together a relatively powerful ending. As the movie fast forwards through the children's lives, the viewers watch as Wendy and her friends grow up to become teenagers and eventually parents. In the final scene, Wendy sees her own children run off to board the same train that she had once taken long ago, elegantly bringing the film full circle.

Overall, however, it seems that Zeitlin focuses too much on creating a film where emotion is driven by artistic sensory experiences; in exchange, *Wendy* fails to find ways to pull viewers into the plot and stimulate them intellectually.

**Wendy**

**Directed by Benh Zeitlin**

**Screenplay by Benh Zeitlin, Eliza Zeitlin**

**Starring Devin France,  
Yashua Mack**

**Rated PG-13, Now  
Playing**

# Getting absolutely destroyed at the Sinclair

## Destroyer

## The Sinclair

## March 6

**By Victoria Dzieciol**

STAFF WRITER

I got a lot of weird looks when I told people what concert I was reviewing, so let me clear one thing up right away: Destroyer is not, in fact, a heavy metal band. The Canadian group borders more on chill indie rock, though perhaps the intensity is not in their sound but in their lyrics. Since their formation in 1995, Destroyer has put out a substantial 12 albums, the latest of which was their 2020 record *Have We Met*. Over the course of these albums, the band has developed a style marked by unconventional artistic choices, enigmatic lyrics, and dedication to a common theme in each record. In light of their new release, the band embarked on an international tour including a stop at the Sinclair in Cambridge.

Nap Eyes, the scheduled opener for the show, was unfortunately unable to perform. Instead, Destroyer's bassist sat in front of a microphone and strummed a few relaxed, folk-influenced tunes on an acoustic guitar. His vocals were light and breathy with a hint of an unidentifiable accent, punctuated by occasional whistling or instrumental intervals. While very simple, the songs had a strong beat and beachy feel that put everyone in a good mood before the main act.

The other members of Destroyer joined their bassist onstage to perform a number of their latest songs, interspersed with a few of their older pieces. Between the bass, electric guitars, keyboards, drums, trumpets, and tambourine, the group produced a complex, psychedelic sound. Echoing, drawn-out guitar notes played a big part in most of the

songs, contributing to the dreamy mood. One member, specializing in playing one of his several trumpets for the entire show, electronically adjusted the reverb in his microphone to transform the familiar sound of the instrument into abstract, discordant tones. Though the majority of the music was on the slower side, the band did showcase their versatility through a range of styles. There were songs that featured energetic guitar solos like many rock songs, while others were funky, upbeat, and catchy like the New Wave music of the 70s and 80s. In a couple songs the pace and volume crescendoed until it reached a peak and the band suddenly ceased playing, creating a wave of silence that crashed over the audience in shocking contrast to the intensity of sound seconds before. Before their last number, Destroyer's trumpet player performed a minutes-long, abstract interlude. Screeching, dissonant notes built tension in the venue indefinitely with every audience member watching and waiting for another song to begin.

The lead singer himself was just as eccentric as the trumpet solo. Sporting long, unruly curls and an expression that never seemed to change, it was hard to tear my eyes away from him. At first I was concerned he was somehow unwell; he never smiled, he closed his eyes while he sang, he constantly leaned on a microphone stand for support, and every moment he didn't spend singing he spent kneeling and taking a drink. But by the end of the concert, the vocals became more fervent even if his manner didn't change, and I became convinced that this was simply a part of the personality that makes Destroyer unique. His voice differed from a lot of indie bands today — slightly nasally, quavering, and with an accent that was hard to place, it was reminiscent of the vocals of classic rock bands such as The Clash. The vocals were unhurried and bordered on speaking, almost as if the singer was reciting poetry; and, in fact, in the middle of the concert, he read a poem with a subtle melody to slow music played by the rest of the band.



VICTORIA DZIECIOL—THE TECH

**Destroyer performs** songs from their latest album, *Have We Met*, at the Sinclair Friday.

Everything about the vocals drew attention to the words they contained, which were cryptic and metaphorical. When I wasn't pondering the lyrics, Destroyer's music put me in such a reflective state that I found my mind wandering.

Destroyer's lyrics, as well as some of the music and especially the trumpet solo, embodied a deep sense of dread that felt all too familiar. Destroyer is a band that has been around for a while, and the recent *Have We Met* album was actually first conceived before the turn of the century as a response to Y2K. Yet with issues from climate change to

epidemics plaguing the minds of the modern audience, the music seemed just as suited for 2020 as it was for 2000. Behind the mellow indie melodies, Destroyer's music intermittently elicited thoughts of impending doom and drew on fears of what the world might be like in the future. Perhaps from an entertainment standpoint, nothing about this concert stood out, and some things — like the trumpet solo — even seemed a little weird. But all things considered, it seemed like a work of art worth contemplating, to feel connected to the past and also to dwell on the future.

```
from new_skills import *  
  
def learnMarketableJobSkills():  
    return linux, OSX, javascript, applescript, perl, python, PHP  
  
if self.interest == True:  
    print "E-mail join@tech.mit.edu"
```



## VIDEO GAME REVIEW

# Let your dreams come true

Play, create, and share in this game for making games

**By Matt Farejowicz**  
*STAFF WRITER*

*Dreams* is not your standard video game. There is no core gameplay loop, no concrete objectives, and no well-defined genre. If you were to repeatedly walk by someone that was playing it, you might think that they were playing a different game every time. This is because *Dreams* is a game in which you can make other games. If that sounds ridiculous and hard to believe, it's because it absolutely is, but in the best way possible. With *Dreams*, Media Molecule has put out a title that is both ambitious and boundary-breaking, providing nearly infinite content and making for one of the most unique gameplay experiences to date.

*Dreams* comes in two parts, Dream Surfing and Dream Shaping. With Dream Shaping, players can not only create self-contained games, but audio and visual showcases as well. This is done with an extremely fleshed-out editor where players can sculpt, paint, create music, edit logic, make cutscenes, and more. After completing a creation, players can share their work with

others, which leads to Dream Surfing. While surfing, players can look for games to play, art to view, or music to listen to. For those that have played *LittleBigPlanet*, Media Molecule's earlier series, this general format will be familiar. However, *Dreams* takes the developer's "play, create, share" ideology to a completely new level.

I focused mostly on surfing during my time with *Dreams*. And let me tell you, never have I experienced so much variety and genuine awe when playing a video game. While playing, it is hard to believe that all of the content is produced right within the game. Many creations could be their own titles on other game platforms. One moment I was controlling a godzilla-like monster, trying to destroy as much of a city as I could to score as many points as possible; the next, I was the hero of an hour-long RPG with an intricate combat system, detailed enemies, and original music.

Surfing is made immensely easier thanks to a well-done discovery system. As one might imagine, there is extensive content, but *Dreams* does a fantastic job of helping the player find what they want (even if they

don't know what that is). You can search by tag, browse trending dreams, or even "autosurf" to get a helping of creations that *Dreams* believes you will like.

I briefly checked out the creation side as well. It comes off as easy to pick up, but difficult to master. There is an extensive set of tutorials provided within the game, which greatly facilitates learning. For example, there were seven tutorials on different ways to move the camera around. There are countless more instructions for things like creating characters, tweaking settings, and making gameplay logic. One could very easily get lost within the toolset, working to craft and perfect their vision.

All content in the game is user-created, with the exception of a few levels provided by the developers (which were also made within *Dreams* itself). The game has been out for less than a month, and there is already more to explore than one could fit in a lifetime. Creators are just beginning to understand the capabilities of the tools, meaning creations are only getting better and better. *Dreams* also has various ways of inspiring makers, such as creation themes

★★★★★

***Dreams***

Developed by Media  
Molecule

Published by Sony  
Interactive Entertainment

Available on PS4

every week and the oscar-like IMPY awards every year. Practically speaking, this means that those that like to focus on playing won't run out of content anytime soon.

*Dreams* is already incredibly interesting, and promises to become more interesting as time goes on. Whether you are an experienced gamer or an aspiring creator, there is something for everybody to explore. With an almost unlimited potential, *Dreams* stands out as one of the most original games yet.

ARTS ARTS ARTS ARTS ARTS ARTS ARTS ARTS ARTS ARTS

# Capture the Moment



# Join Photo at The Tech

join@tech.mit.edu



# MIT community encouraged to wash hands frequently with soap and water

COVID-19, from Page 1

MIT will “postpone, cancel, or ‘virtualize’” in-person MIT events with more than 150 attendees, including CPW and “other signature spring semester conferences and celebrations,” the policies state.

Dormitory Council CPW/REX chairs Shaida Nishat ’22 and Zawad Chowdhury ’23 wrote in an email to dorm CPW chairs March 6 that they “have received confirmation from Admissions that CPW has been cancelled.”

“Admissions has set up an action committee to plan for alternatives, and they will be looking for student input soon,” Nishat and Chowdhury wrote.

Nishat and Chowdhury wrote that it “can be heartbreaking to put so much effort and care into planning something,” but the cancellation is “to ensure the health and safety of everyone.”

MIT Admissions assistant director Chris Peterson SM ’13 wrote in a blog post March 6 that the admissions office is “excited about working actively with you all [MIT students] to collaboratively design whatever our version of CPW this year will be.”

MIT Emergency Management (EM) “chose 150 people as a threshold to help reduce risk of transmission without calling a halt to all activity on campus,” the policies state, noting that “group size is only one factor to consider in planning an event.”

The policies state that organizers of events with fewer than 150 attendees should consider post-

poning if the events involve participants over the age of 60. Organizers should also avoid confined spaces, allow remote participation, or both.

“Staff working for outside service vendors may not have generous health insurance or sick leave, and we should take steps to help keep them safe,” the policies state.

“In very limited cases, we may consider appeals to hold larger gatherings attended only by members of our community,” the policies state. Exceptions are also possible for “imminent events with travelers already here or en route.”

The policy “does not apply to classroom instruction or other internal gatherings (e.g., colloquia) attended solely by members of the MIT on-campus community.” However, the policies recommend that instructors of large classes “consider offering a way to attend online or arranging other accommodations.”

MIT community members must “cancel or reschedule all K-12 programs and visits to be held at MIT” until May 15. Peterson also wrote in his blog post that “all scheduled information sessions and tours” before May 15 have been cancelled.

The policy may also affect educational outreach programs such as Spark and HSSP.

Additionally, MIT has suspended all international travel “on MIT business or with MIT programs, for all faculty, students, postdocs, and staff,” the policies state. However, MIT community members currently abroad may return to MIT or their homes.

The policies also “discourage personal travel to international

locations by any MIT community member.”

The *New York Times* reported that over 250 coronavirus cases have been reported in the U.S. and over 100,000 cases have been reported worldwide.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has designated China, Iran, South Korea, and Italy as countries that have “widespread sustained (ongoing) transmission” of COVID-19. The CDC has issued a Level 3 travel health notice for these countries and a Level 2 travel health notice for Japan, indicating “sustained (ongoing) community transmission.”

MIT community members who travel to countries on the CDC COVID-19 travel advisories website are required to fill out a travel registration form. Community members and visitors returning from CDC Level 3 countries are required to self-quarantine for 14 days before entering MIT campus.

Additionally, the policies encourage MIT community members to “weigh whether any domestic travel between now and May 15 is essential” and “register all non-commuting travel outside of Massachusetts” in the MIT travel registry.

“For our campus community, the current risk level associated with COVID-19 is low,” Reif wrote. However, Reif emphasized that the MIT community should “make prudent choices to protect the health of our own community and the broader communities we belong to.”

Reif wrote that MIT administration “consulted experts at MIT

Medical and carefully considered the decisions of peer universities and major businesses around the world” in developing the guidelines.

On March 2, MIT Medical recommended that community members wash their hands frequently with soap and water, avoid touching their face, and stay home if they feel sick. Hand sanitizer dispensers have also been distributed throughout campus.

MIT EM has created a COVID-19 planning team and six working groups to “develop a set of contingency plans in the event MIT’s normal operations are interrupted in the coming weeks,” according to a MIT News article March 5. The working groups are focused on academic continuity, research continuity, business continuity, medical response, student/residential response, and communications response.

The policies state that MIT EM will “provide frequent updates and offer new guidance about activities after May 15 as soon as [it] can.”

Professor Daniela Rus wrote in an email to the CSAIL community March 5 that lab members who planned to present at conferences this spring will instead have their presentations filmed and posted online by CSAIL videographers.

CSAIL is “expanding and testing our remote-presence infrastructure with respect to exploring the possibility of doing seminars and other research events remotely,” Rus wrote.

Rus wrote that additional hand sanitizers have been distributed in CSAIL lab spaces. Rus also

recommended that CSAIL community members “stay home” if they “exhibit flu or even cold-like symptoms.”

EECS admitted graduate student visit days will continue as planned March 6 and 7, EECS department head Asu Ozdaglar PhD ’03 wrote in an email to CSAIL community members.

However, EECS will video stream all information sessions, allow video-chats and phone conversations with faculty for admitted graduate students who feel uncomfortable attending in-person events, and reimburse travel expenses for students who cancel their visit due to health concerns, Professor Leslie Kolodziejski wrote in a statement forwarded to the CSAIL community.

Harvard issued new travel and event guidelines as well in an email to the Harvard community March 6. The guidelines “strongly discourage any nonessential large gatherings of 100 or more people” and encourage event organizers to consider using “remote technology” such as Zoom or Skype.

Harvard-related “non-essential domestic air travel” and international travel are “prohibited,” and personal international travel is “strongly discouraged.” The guidelines are effective until April 30.

Members of the MIT community with questions or concerns about the new policies can email MIT EM at em-staff@mit.edu. Community members who wish to hold an event with more than 150 people can submit inquiries to COVIDevents@mit.edu.

## New policies allow students to spread out use of P/NR classes

CUP, from Page 1

student stress,” while simplifying “the current menu of grading options.”

Under the flexible P/NR grading system, first-year grading remains P/NR in the fall and ABC/No Record in the spring, although credit limits for first-years are under discussion. Beginning in the second term, students would be able to designate up to 48 units total as P/NR during their time at MIT. Students would have until the add date of the next enrolled semester to retroactively convert classes to P/NR grading.

The proposed changes place no restrictions on either the timing or classes converted to P/NR. All subjects would be eligible for P/

NR designation, including GIRs and major or minor requirements. A passing grade would be a C- or better, while an NR would be a D or F.

Students would be free to spread out their use of P/NR classes or use them all in one semester.

The Flexible P/NR grading policy was proposed by physics professor Jesse Thaler.

If the motion to change the *Rules and Regulations of the Faculty* is approved at the faculty meeting April 22, the CUP will review the “implications and consequences of the policy during the first five years and report to the Faculty with a recommendation to reaffirm, amend, or rescind the policy,” according to the proposal overview.

## Open advising hours and higher-level tutoring announced in math department

Two new math department initiatives were announced Feb. 28: open advising hours and higher-level tutoring. Math academic administrator Barbara Peskin announced the initiatives in an email to all current and prospective math majors.

Peskin wrote in an email to *The Tech* March 11 that the initiatives “will have to assume a ‘virtual’ format for the remainder of this term” due to MIT’s COVID-19 policies.

Peskin wrote in her Feb. 28 email that the Math Learning Center (MLC) will expand tutoring to more advanced undergraduate subjects such as 18.100 (Real Analysis), 18.200 (Principles of Discrete Mathematics), 18.700/701/702/703 (Algebra), 18.600 (Probability

and Random Variables), 18.650 (Fundamentals of Statistics), and 18.901 (Introduction to Topology). The MLC currently provides tutoring in “big service subjects” such as 18.01, 18.02, 18.03, and 18.06.

In an interview with *The Tech*, Peskin described how the “next level up” subjects cover “higher levels of abstraction, mathematical sophistication, and proof-based coursework” than the department’s introductory math courses.

The open advising hours were intended to allow students to receive “drop-in” advising from faculty members, Peskin wrote in her Feb. 28 email. Students could “get questions answered, supplement the advising you already receive from your academic advi-

sor, or address topics you might be more comfortable discussing with somebody else,” Peskin wrote.

Peskin said that the open advising hours were partly implemented due to the high number of undergraduate students within the math department (about 400 students) compared to faculty members (just over 40). This imbalance “requires every member of the math faculty to be an advisor,” Peskin said.

The open advising hours will also be open to non-math majors. They will provide “a chance for non-majors to get advice about math subjects they might be taking, UROPS, and jobs,” said Peskin.

*Kerri Lu contributed reporting. —Margaret Rodriguez*

Do you like **telling stories** about your life?



Are you dying to share your **latest discoveries?**



Join **Campus Life @ The Tech** and share your stories with our 15,000+ readers!



E-mail [join@tech.mit.edu](mailto:join@tech.mit.edu)

## Fellows interviewed did not prepare this year

Putnam, from Page 1

Sah, Zhang, and Zhu were all participants in 18.A34 (Mathematical Problem Solving), a Putnam seminar for first year, run by Yufei Zhao ’10, professor of mathematics and a former Putnam participant. Zhao wrote in an email to *The Tech* that the goals of the seminar are to prepare students for the competition, “to improve their communication skills through in-class presentations and critical feedback,” and “to encourage students to use their existing skills as a springboard onto higher mathematics.”

Zhao has worked with Sah, as well as Mehtaab Sawhney ’20, an honorable mention, and David

Stoner, a former twice-Fellow who attended Harvard, to solve “a number of fundamental open problems in extremal graph theory.” They have written four papers together, one of which was accepted at *Inventiones Mathematicae*.

Additionally, Zhao, Yao, and Zhang “solved a longstanding open problem in discrete geometry and discovered a surprising and fundamental result in spectral graph theory.”

“The Institute, at all levels, has been very supportive of our efforts and cares deeply about the academic excellence of our students,” Zhao wrote. “I find it incredibly meaningful and enjoyable to work with the next generation of math-

ematicians and provide them with encouragement and guidance to succeed.”

Zhang and Qi listed a wide range of classes that have inspired and influenced them academically, covering topics including combinatorics, number theory, and theoretical computer science.

“Math classes at MIT were very difficult for me and some fields of mathematics are too abstract,” Sun wrote in an email to *The Tech*.

Zhang, Qi, and Sun all said they did not prepare for the Putnam this year.

The other Putnam Fellows did not respond to *The Tech*’s request for comment.

*Kerri Lu contributed reporting.*

Want to be Editor in Chief of *The Tech*?  
Most EICs start as news writers.

[join@tech.mit.edu](mailto:join@tech.mit.edu)



To Democratic voters registered at SidPac, Ashdown, and pika:

Thank you for helping reelect me to serve MIT's Cambridgeport dorms as a Democratic Ward Committee member in Cambridge Ward 5!

monwealth of M  
ESIDENTIAL PR  
DEMOCRATIC PAI  
OFFICIAL  
SPECIMEN  
BALLOT  
Tuesday, March 3, 2  
oval ● to the right of the can  
name and residence in the blank

WARD COMMITTEE

Vote for not more than Thirty

• To vote for individual candidates fill in the oval after each name

or

• To vote for a whole group fill in the oval after the word "Group"

Do not vote for more than Thirty.

WARD COMMITTEE, CAMBRIDGE-WD5 30

Group

Fill in the oval to vote for the whole group.

LISA A. GRIFFITH

111 Magazine St. ++++++

SEAN McFARLAND

52 Pearl St. ++++++

KEVIN RICHARD DONAHER

225 Chestnut St. +++++

CHLOE A. GOTSIS

91 Sidney St. ++++++

KAINA CHEN

155 Pearl St. ++++++

JAMES K. HERMS

14 Lawrence St. ++++++

I ran on a campaign issue of trying to improve coordination between Cambridge Public Health and MIT Medical. I'll continue promoting issues and objectives that you tell me are important to you.

James K. Herms (MatE '87)  
14 Lawrence St | Cambridge 02139  
herms@alum.mit.edu

Advertisement paid for by James K. Herms

Solution to Exemption

from page 13

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 7 |
| 3 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 1 | 2 |
| 5 | 9 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 8 |
| 1 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 9 |
| 6 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 7 | 4 |
| 2 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 6 |
| 7 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 1 |
| 9 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 5 |

Solution to Purell

from page 13

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| 3 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 4 |
| 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 5 |
| 5 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| 6 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| 1 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 2 |

Solution to Eviction

from page 12

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 9 |
| 2 | 9 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 1 |
| 8 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 5 |
| 3 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 4 |
| 4 | 8 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| 5 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 3 |
| 6 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 8 |

Solution to Zoom

from page 12

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| 2 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| 5 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 4 |
| 1 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| 4 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| 3 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 2 |

Solution to Various

from page 12

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B | A | G | S | S | C | O | N | E | A | C | H | E |
| A | C | R | E | H | O | P | O | N | F | R | E | E |
| S | L | U | G | A | M | E | N | D | F | U | E | L |
| S | U | B | M | A | R | I | N | E | B | O | I | L |
| E | X | E | C | S | F | I | R | S |   |   |   |   |
| S | P | I | N | E | S | L | A | D | D | E | R | S |
| P | A | C | T | S | R | O | A | D | S | S | E | E |
| A | P | E | S | H | O | R | S | E | T | H | A | N |
| D | E | B | S | I | D | E | S | F | A | I | L | S |
| E | R | R | A | N | D | S | H | E | L | P | M | E |
| E | R | I | E | S | P | A | T | E |   |   |   |   |
| S | M | A | R | T | O | I | L | T | A | N | K | E |
| L | A | K | E | A | G | R | E | E | T | A | L | E |
| A | L | E | S | C | L | E | A | R | E | L | S | E |
| P | E | R | T | T | E | N | T | S | D | E | A | L |

101 THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU GRADUATE

32. Take a stroll through Little Italy in the North End

Join the Arts department at The Tech and write restaurant reviews.  
(And get reimbursed for your meal )

We get you the tickets.  
You get us the review.

ARTS at

The Tech

Established 1881

events • movies • theater • concerts  
music • books • restaurants • interviews

join@the-tech.mit.edu



Want to gain marketable job skills?

Join The Tech's Technology department and learn how to use

- Linux
- Apache
- PHP
- Python
- Perl
- OSX
- MySQL
- and more!

E-mail  
join@tech.mit.edu

Have something to say?  
Write opinion for The Tech!  
opinion@tech.mit.edu





# Zoom

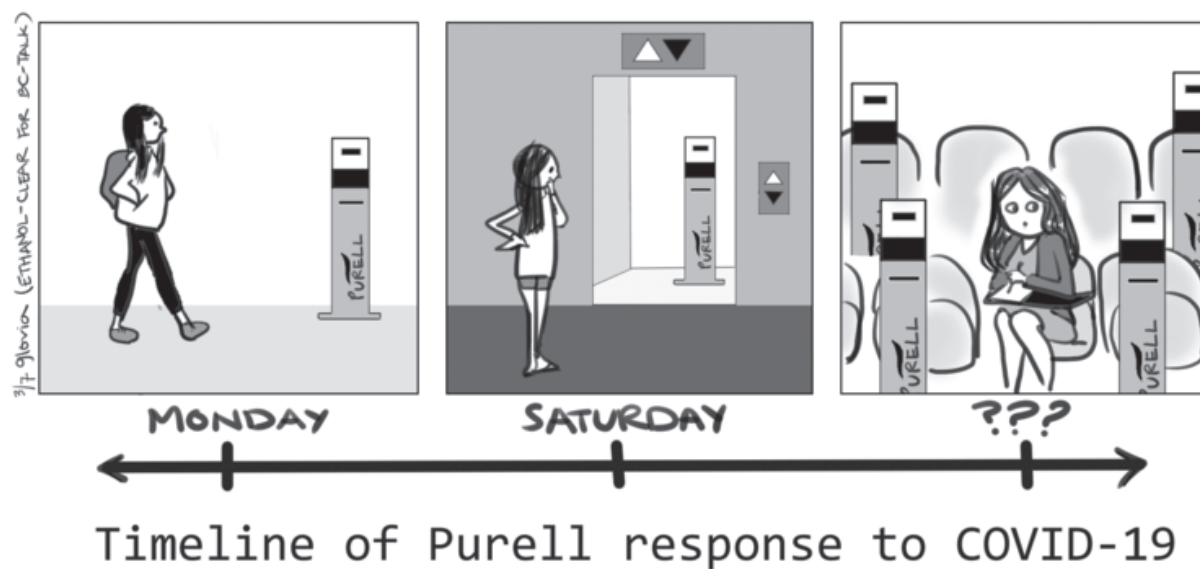
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   | 5 |   |   | 4 |   |
| 1 |   |   | 3 |   |   | 7 |   | 6 |
|   | 5 | 6 |   |   | 1 |   |   |   |
|   | 9 | 5 | 8 |   | 4 |   |   |   |
|   |   | 4 | 7 | 9 | 3 | 6 |   |   |
|   |   |   | 1 |   | 5 | 9 | 8 |   |
|   |   |   | 5 |   |   | 2 | 1 |   |
| 5 |   | 1 |   |   | 8 |   |   | 3 |
|   | 7 |   |   | 1 |   |   |   |   |

|     |    |      |  |     |     |
|-----|----|------|--|-----|-----|
| 2-  |    | 90x  |  |     | 5   |
| 48x |    |      |  |     | 1   |
| 15x |    | 12x  |  |     | 24x |
| 60x |    | 6x   |  | 4   |     |
|     | 2÷ | 120x |  | 4+  |     |
|     |    | 5    |  | 12x |     |

## Various Vessels by Gail Grabowski

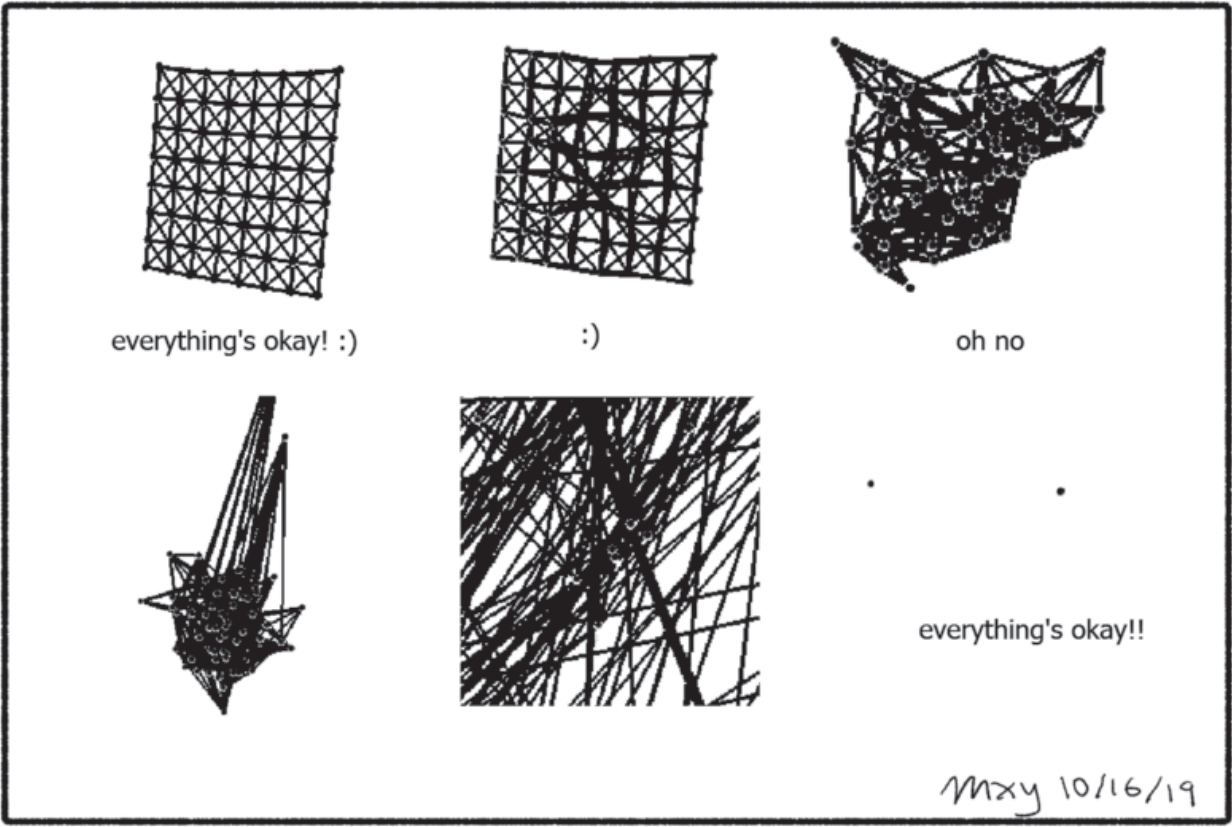
|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |    | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |    | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 |    |    |    |    | 15 |    |    |    |    |    | 16 |    |    |    |
| 17 |    |    |    |    | 18 |    |    |    |    |    | 19 |    |    |    |
| 20 |    |    |    |    | 21 |    |    |    |    |    | 22 |    |    |    |
|    |    |    | 23 |    |    |    |    |    | 24 |    |    |    |    |    |
| 25 | 26 | 27 |    |    |    |    |    | 28 |    |    |    |    | 29 | 30 |
| 31 |    |    |    |    |    | 32 | 33 |    |    |    |    | 34 |    |    |
| 35 |    |    |    |    | 36 |    |    |    |    |    | 37 |    |    |    |
| 38 |    |    |    |    | 39 |    |    |    |    |    | 40 |    |    |    |
| 41 |    |    |    | 42 |    |    |    |    |    | 43 |    |    |    |    |
|    |    | 44 |    |    |    |    |    | 45 | 46 |    |    |    |    |    |
| 47 | 48 |    |    |    |    |    | 49 |    |    |    |    | 50 | 51 | 52 |
| 53 |    |    |    |    |    | 54 |    |    |    |    |    | 55 |    |    |
| 56 |    |    |    |    |    | 57 |    |    |    |    |    | 58 |    |    |
| 59 |    |    |    |    |    | 60 |    |    |    |    |    | 61 |    |    |

## Hand Sanitizer





miscellany #16: graphics



# Exemption

Solution, page 11

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   |   | 1 | 5 |   |   |
| 3 |   |   |   | 8 |   | 9 | 1 |   |
|   |   |   |   | 4 |   | 6 |   | 3 |
| 4 |   |   |   | 1 | 7 | 3 |   |   |
| 1 |   |   | 3 |   | 4 |   |   | 9 |
|   |   | 2 | 5 | 9 |   |   |   | 4 |
| 2 |   | 5 |   | 7 |   |   |   |   |
|   | 6 | 3 |   | 5 |   |   |   | 1 |
|   |   | 4 | 8 |   |   |   |   |   |

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.

# Purell

Solution, page 11

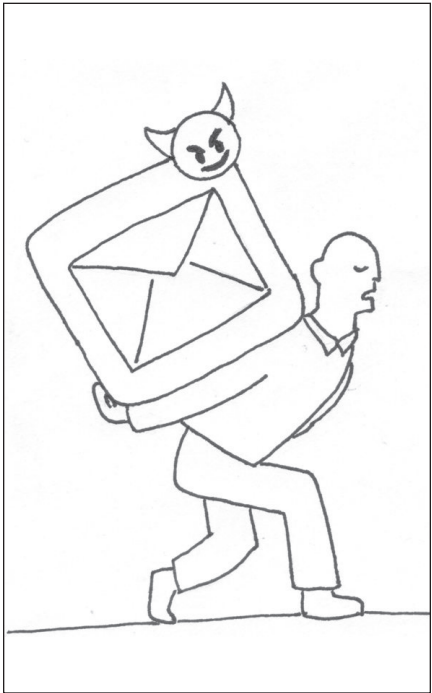
|      |     |      |     |  |     |
|------|-----|------|-----|--|-----|
| 2÷   |     | 120× |     |  | 12× |
| 144× |     |      | 30× |  |     |
|      | 12× |      | 2   |  | 5   |
| 5    |     | 11+  |     |  | 5−  |
| 11+  |     | 48×  |     |  |     |
| 6×   |     |      | 5   |  | 2   |

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1–6. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.

# Stoned Age







**By Kristina Chen**  
*EDITOR IN CHIEF*

## ME VS. ME

## Taking a step back to evaluate why I micromanage my own schedule

**By Joanna Lin**  
*EDITOR*

**Finally, at 11:00 p.m., everything was squared away and I was ready to start my pset and readings.**

With my classes over for the day at 3:30 p.m., I headed to my UROP, which pretty much was me trying to centrifuge a sample through an Amicon for two hours to no avail. Deciding to wait until the next day, I headed over to McCormick to help run ADT's first study break of the semester (soufflé pancakes!). After an hour and a half, I ran home to set up for a New House MedLinks study break. I wasn't going to be home when the event started, so I needed to pre-plan my section (the mug raffle). Then, with minutes until 7:00 p.m., I walked as fast as I could to Lobby 13 for ballroom practice. I emerged at 9:30 p.m. having learned some cool facts about my posture and my arms. Heading home, my last task was to host the second half of the MedLinks

the app, telling me how many emails made their way into my inbox as I slept.

However, this behavior was not just limited to my mornings. During the day, whenever I worked on something on my laptop, I could say with certainty that whatever task I was doing took at least 10 percent longer because with every email notification I received, I spent five seconds looking at its contents and sticking it in a folder. There was just something so satisfying about not seeing the red bubble and having a mostly empty inbox, not congested with random messages about people moving other people's laundry, Piazza notifications that I never get around to unsubscribing from, and unending dormspam.

I began to recognize the absurdity of my email-sorting habits when I would be trying to type notes, working on a pset, or having

a casual conversation, and completely lose my train of thought at the sight of an email notification. An email couldn't survive in my inbox for even two minutes before being dragged into some other folder. It doesn't seem too bad to have a clear inbox and organized emails, but I soon realized that I worried more about deciding which box an email fit in than I cared about its contents. Rather than actually think about what the emails were saying, I read them for the singular purpose of getting rid of the red bubble and having a nice, clean inbox.

You can probably imagine my horror. Sure, I saw the red bubble often enough when I did my morning sort, but the number of emails I received while asleep rarely exceeded 15. At that point, I don't think I'd had more than 20 unread emails at a time for months. I immediately began to read and sort, and now that the only thing I was thinking about was these emails, compared to my typical pattern of moving the email and continuing on with my other tasks, I found myself caring a little more about what they had to say. No, I didn't start gaining any amazing insights from laundry emails, but I did start reading Piazza posts that seemed helpful to

me and making notes of events that sounded interesting in my calendar.

**If there's any habit of yours that is causing you more stress than it's worth, try to change how often you engage with it.**

More significantly, my general quality of life has improved. When I'm not constantly receiving notifications, I feel less anxious about reacting to them. Though I used to be unequivocally bothered by the thought that there were emails I hadn't yet sorted and that I would have to see the red bubble, hitting the "quit" button has brought me peace of mind.

I doubt everyone is as compulsive as I was about getting my emails organized, but if I can name anything as a lesson from my strange email-sorting addiction, it's to find your "quit" button. If there's any habit of yours that is causing you more stress than it's worth, try to change how often you engage with it. Taking a moment to stop, breathe, and be free of a persistent concern can make a big difference in your health and happiness.

event. Finally, at 11:00 p.m., everything was squared away, and I was ready to start my pset and readings.

**I'm uncomfortable with free time, because I've been trained to think that it's unproductive.**

That was an exhausting day. I recently went to an MD-PhD panel where one of the admissions officers said reading the applicants' schedules often tires him out. But I schedule myself so strictly for a reason: I don't do well with loads of unstructured time. If I had four hours to do nothing but read one paper, I would probably not finish. There would be YouTube videos watched, random conversations had, and food eaten, but not even half the reading done.

I'm uncomfortable with free time, because I've been trained to think that it's unproductive. In a capitalist society where there's a linear correlation between time and money, I can't help but feel the need to keep going, all the time. I schedule my classes on Firehose in blocks because it's more efficient than spacing them out and wasting every other hour. If I'm not dead tired at the end of the day, it only means I haven't done as much as I could have.

I've often wondered what would happen if I didn't spend all my time doing something or another. Ultimately, I generate a list of excuses to keep doing what I'm doing, ranging from wholesome (I love the communities I'm in) to logical (I won't have the chance to do this later in life) to more insidious (Everyone else is doing everything too, or it will seem like I didn't take full advantage of the opportunities presented to me).

There's definitely a hint of greed and pride hidden in there. I want to participate in all of these activities, I want to be capable of



**Stuck in a never-ending whirlwind** of obligations that I had brought upon myself.

participating in them, and most worryingly, I want to tell other people that I participate in them. No matter how I look at it, it boils down to a rat race towards an uncertain future.

With our impending doom, I guess this entire article is null. I am stressed. And it is still stressing me out. I love you all, and I'll hopefully see you soon.







*MIT sailing performed excellently at the Wood Trophy and at its Team Race Invite*

## BEN KETTLE — THE TECH

**Two members** of the MIT Sailing team hike out after coming about at the MIT Team Race Invitational this week.

—Ben Kettle



*join@tech.mit.edu*  
W20-483, 617-253-1541

For more information, please contact [sports@the-tech.mit.edu](mailto:sports@the-tech.mit.edu)



# Get paid to process RFPs!

**Join the Business Department of *The Tech* and earn \$12/hr!**

Email [join@tech.mit.edu](mailto:join@tech.mit.edu)

**We want to learn about  
your team! Email us!**

**sports@tech.mit.edu**

